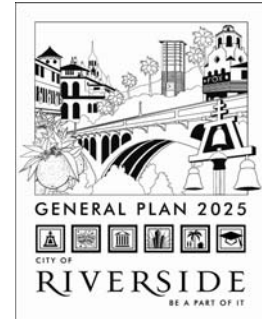


General Plan Program Citizens' Advisory Committee

Minutes of Meeting #11– March 1, 2004



The Citizens Advisory Committee (CAC) for the General Plan program held its tenth meeting on Monday, March 1, 2004 at 6:00 p.m. in the Large Conference Room on the 5th floor of Riverside City Hall. Attendees were as follows:

CAC Members

Chair David Leonard
Manuel Carrasco
Stan Brown
Mike Teer
Morgan Keith
Barry Johnson
Maynard Lowry
Bill Warkentin
Matt Webb
David McNiel

Other interested parties in attendance

Councilman Dom Betro
Bill Wilkman
Dan Hays
Gabrielle Mankin
Mary Jane Dana
Ron Richmond

City Staff

Ken Gutierrez, Planning Director
Tom Boyd, City Engineer
Fran Dunajski, Traffic Engineer
Craig Aaron, Principal Planner
Diane Jenkins, AICP, Senior Planner
Patricia Brenes, Associate Planner
Robert Laag, Planning Intern

Consultant Team

Gary Hamrick, Meyer, Mohaddes Associates
Laura Stetson, Cotton/Bridges/Associates
John Cook, Cotton/Bridges/Associates

Introductory Remarks

Chair Leonard noted several changes to the order of events on the agenda. He stated that the CAC would like to hear Matters from the Audience first so that the CAC would have the benefit of public comment prior to making any decisions regarding the Washington-Alessandro Committee (WAC) report. He also stated that the Circulation Presentation and the WAC report items would be shifted.

Minutes, January 28, 2004

No changes to the minutes were suggested. Approval of the minutes was moved, seconded and approved by acclamation.

Update on General Plan Process

Laura Stetson stated that the consultant team had submitted a partial, preliminary draft of the General Plan to staff earlier that day. She stated that the submittal did not include a circulation element, pending resolution of issues the CAC would address later in the meeting. She stated that the second Citizens' Congress was scheduled for Saturday, June 12, 2004 at California Baptist University and encouraged CAC members to promote the event in the community.

Matters from the Audience

Dan Hays stated that he was representing the Victoria Avenue Historic Preservation Project. He stated that the organization was successful in obtaining National Register status for the Avenue, which can assist in securing funding for its preservation. He stated that its National Register status could be threatened if increased traffic and busier crossings should occur. He stated that underground crossings of Victoria would help keep the Avenue intact.

Bill Wilkman stated that he was retired from the City Planning Department and that he was representing Victoria Avenue Forever. He presented a memorandum in response to the Washington-Alessandro Committee's report; this memorandum indicated strong opposition to the first three recommendations of the WAC report, all focusing upon Overlook Parkway. He stated that WAC recommendations #1 and #3 provide very circuitous connections over inadequate roadways. He stated that recommendation #2 would encourage illegal off-road activity; if the parkway is to be extended to the arroyo, it should be paid for by developers in concert with the development of adjacent land. Victoria Avenue Forever supported WAC recommendation #4, but added that additional design and traffic flow analysis ought to be completed prior to any connection of the ends of Overlook Parkway.

Gabrielle Mankin, representing the WAC, stated that she would defer to Stan Brown, who had attended a meeting earlier that day with City and County officials. Brown stated that there was agreement by City and County staff regarding Lurin Avenue and Iris Avenue as alternative emergency routes for Van Buren. He stated that there was an agreement that the technical staffs of the agencies would work together to resolve outstanding issues.

John Cook then presented a summary of planning staff's review of the WAC report. He grouped the recommendations according to staff positions. Staff agreed with the following WAC recommendations:

- 11: JFK connection
- 17: Dauchy extension
- 18: Barton Road connection
- 21: Riverside National Cemetery

Staff agreed in concept with the following WAC recommendations:

- 22: Iris Avenue: staff supports the extension of Iris as a local street
- 23-24: Lurin Avenue: staff supports the designation of Lurin (as well as Krameria and Mariposa) as alternative emergency routes for Van Buren. The concept is to disperse alternative route traffic onto several streets.

Cook stated that staff found several of the WAC recommendations to be overly specific for inclusion in a General Plan level of analysis and policy:

- 5-8 Trautwein-Alessandro area
- 13-16 Wood Road-Van Buren

Cook stated that staff found the following WAC recommendations either scheduled to be completed or already completed, independent of the General Plan update program:

- 10 JFK/Trautwein signal improvements
- 13-14 Wood Road/Van Buren street improvements
- 25 Arlington – left turn pocket at Victoria

Cook stated that staff disagreed with the following WAC recommendations

- 12 Wood Road connection between JFK and Erickson

Craig Aaron stated that this last recommendation was problematic because a home is in the way, a bridge would be required, and the arroyo could be threatened.

Matt Webb stated that there should be a detailed analysis of the Madison/Washington area in order to understand how traffic would move from Overlook Parkway to the 91 Freeway. He stated that unless this analysis is performed, the EIR for the General Plan could be open to challenge.

After further discussion, items 1-4 – regarding Overlook Parkway – as well as 9 (Alessandro lane count) and 19 (Central Avenue) were set aside for consideration later.

Circulation Modeling

Next, Gary Hamrick, project traffic consultant, made a presentation on additional traffic modeling efforts associated with the circulation element update. (Hamrick's presentation is available for review on the General Plan website: www.riversideca.gov click on the General Plan icon.)

The modeling examined 4 different alternatives and their respective impacts upon Riverside's circulation network:

1. Cajalco is expanded to 6 lanes between I-15 and I-215
2. Same as above, plus Cajalco tunnel extension through to SR-241 in Irvine
3. Cajalco expanded to 6 lanes between I-15 and I-215, plus connection of Overlook Parkway to Madison Street and completion of Central Avenue
4. Cajalco expanded to 6 lanes between I-15 and I-215, plus connection of Overlook Parkway to Madison only

Hamrick made the following observations relative to each alternative:

Alternative 1: Cajalco 6 lanes between I-15 and I-215: Modest but not significant improvements to Van Buren Boulevard. Cajalco not heavily used because somewhat out of the way. No other streets significantly improved.

Alternative 2: Cajalco 6 lanes to SR-241: Now Cajalco becomes a heavily used route; would be at LOS E/F during peak hours. Wood Road and streets south of Alessandro would also worsen to LOS E/F during peak hours. However, this would result in marginal improvements to Van Buren Boulevard, Martin Luther King Boulevard, and La Sierra Boulevard.

Alternative 3: Cajalco 6 lanes to I-15 plus Overlook Parkway and Central Avenue connection/completion: Central Avenue and Madison Street worsened; noticeable improvements to Van Buren Boulevard, Martin Luther King Boulevard, Arlington Avenue, and Alessandro Boulevard.

Alternative 4: Cajalco 6 lanes to I-15 plus Overlook Parkway connection: Madison Street still worsened; modest improvements on Van Buren Boulevard.

Hamrick noted that for all alternatives, the connected portion of Overlook Parkway operates at LOS D or better. He also noted that the completion of Central Avenue improves the Arlington/Alessandro connection, but has negative impacts on Central and nearby roads.

Hamrick noted that several options were available to help improve conditions:

- Adding capacity to selected roadways
- Allowing LOS E at peak hours at all or some intersections
- Implementing spot improvements
- Enhancing and encouraging transit usage/vehicle trip reduction
- Continuing to work with other agencies on regional solutions

Hamrick stated at a joint meeting of the City Council and City Planning Commission, several further suggestions were raised, including considering the recommendations of the WAC report, considering the development of a "beltway" around the City, ensuring that Proposition R is followed, implementing a light rail or monorail system, imposing tolls on Van Buren and Alessandro, and implementing "zipper" or reversible lanes to temporarily expand capacity. Hamrick noted that the proposal to impose tolls on City roadways was not legal and therefore should not be considered further; he also stated that Riverside's highways do not experience the conditions necessary to make good use of reversible lanes, namely high volume and high directional imbalance.

Chair Leonard asked if the General Plan could allow LOS E only at peak hours or only at certain intersections. Hamrick responded that this can be done.

Chair Leonard asked if the connection of Overlook via Madison really solves anything. Hamrick responded that the model indicated modest improvements on Van Buren and Alessandro, but not enough to measurably improve the Level of Service (LOS).

Chair Leonard asked if the model considered Street "Z" in the March Air Reserve Base and how well it alleviated traffic conditions on Van Buren Boulevard. Hamrick responded that he would have to verify that this street was considered in the model.

Director Gutierrez asked if the model indicated that all streets in the current General Plan need to be built out. Hamrick said yes. Gutierrez stated that for the most part, the City's circulation systems works well and that the land uses proposed for the Magnolia Avenue spine are not what appear to be causing LOS problems elsewhere in the City.

Matt Webb asked if the circulation plan map was based on intersections or links. Hamrick responded that it was link-based, but that 15 key intersections were also analyzed. Hamrick added that traffic studies for the Magnolia Avenue Specific Plan would analyze the need for further intersection improvements. Webb reiterated that he would like to see a detailed study of how traffic would move between the western end of Overlook and the 91 Freeway.

Chair Leonard asked if the General Plan could include flexible policies designed to minimize "cut-through" traffic local streets. He asked if such policies could be changed depending on observed conditions. Hamrick stated that cities have implemented such policies, including the City of Livermore, which opposes road widening at its gateways and uses signal timing to discourage use of local streets for regional circulation.

Stan Brown asked about the feasibility of a beltway. Hamrick responded that such a road is outside the City and that Riverside County would take the lead on considering the matter any further.

Bill Warkentin stated that he heard little to no discussion of transit. He said that he would not want to see so many streets widened or expanded. He said that the City's standing in the region enabled it to lead a wider effort for transit improvements in and outside of the City. He stated that the General Plan should include very strong statements about advocacy for transit improvements, especially for an east-west route north of the Santa Ana River. He said transit policies need to be strong and very goal-oriented.

Dave McNiel asked why the model was showing LOS E/F for 3rd Street between Market and Brockton. Hamrick responded that this 2-lane roadway may be over its capacity and that he would research the matter further.

Matt Webb asked if the consultants found any alternative that mitigates all traffic to LOS D or better. Hamrick responded that no such alternative was modeled; that numerous roads would need to be expanded to 8 or more lanes to achieve such a Level of Service.

Hamrick discussed Orange County's "smart streets", which are 6 lane roadways whose capacity is increased through such improvements as minimal driveways, minimized

intersections, bus cut-outs and limited street parking. He stated that a similar policy could be created in Riverside for such streets as Van Buren and Magnolia, particularly to help foster Bus Rapid Transit (BRT).

Chair Leonard discussed that this was the last CAC meeting planned, but noted that the group seemed to need at least one more meeting to come to closure on traffic issues. He added that he would like to see another meeting added to allow the CAC a chance to review a preliminary draft of the General Plan. Director Gutierrez noted that the CAC would need to request additional funding from the City Council. Matt Webb stated that any expansion of the scope should include a more detailed analysis of Overlook Parkway. In sum, the group endorsed the addition of these two meetings.

Chair Leonard returned to the discussion of the WAC report. The group voted on WAC Report Item 9 (maintaining Alessandro at 6 lanes in the General Plan as is currently proposed) and Item 19 (Central Avenue connection).

Item 9: Alessandro at 6 lanes: Endorsed by majority vote.

Item 19: Central Avenue connection: 7 ayes, 3 nays: Endorsed by majority vote.

Further Matters from the Audience

Mary Jane Dana asked to address the CAC. She stated that there was interest in seeing greater retail development instead of industrial development in the La Sierra gateway area. Chair Leonard stated that he would be happy to address the question following adjournment of the meeting.

Adjournment

Chair Leonard adjourned the meeting at 8:15 p.m.